

De Se Propositions and Predicates of Personal Taste

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Scott Soames (2010, 2015) develops and defends a naturalistic, cognitive conception of propositions, according to which propositions are mental acts of predicating properties of objects. Soames applies this conception of propositions to a number of philosophical and linguistic issues including identity statements, attitude reports, and *de se* attitudes. This paper explores the possibility that Soames's theory of propositions may also be employed to provide a satisfactory account of predicates of personal taste, such as 'tasty' and 'fun'.

In recent years there is a growing interest in the semantics and pragmatics of predicates of personal taste, and various analyses of them have been proposed in the philosophical and linguistic literature. The purpose of this paper is to present an alternative account of predicates of personal taste based on Soames's theory of *de se* propositions. According to Soames, although the truth conditions of the sentence 'I am hungry' used by Scott Soames are equivalent to those of 'Scott Soames is hungry', 'I am hungry' pragmatically imparts a truth-conditionally equivalent but a cognitively distinct *de se* proposition. A *de se* proposition requires the agent who entertains the proposition to identify a propositional constituent in the first-person way; when Scott Soames says 'I am hungry', he is not merely predicating the property of being hungry of a particular person (i.e., Scott Soames) but predicating the property of a person *being identified as himself*. This extra bit of cognitive act distinguishes a *de se* proposition from an equivalent *de re* proposition.

The idea to be explored is that sentences containing a predicate of personal taste are also associated with *de se* propositions. The basic *de re* proposition expressed by 'This is tasty' relative to a context is the same for all individuals, and so there can be disputes about taste. Additionally, for each individual, there is a *de se* proposition associated with the sentence that can be entertained only by that individual; the *de se* proposition requires the individual to identify a propositional constituent (most likely the property of being tasty) in the first-person way, through the individual's own experience. Such *de se* propositions explain why we think that each of us is in some sense correct in asserting that something is or isn't tasty.

参考文献

Soames, S. 2010. *What is Meaning?* Princeton University Press.

Soames, S. 2015. *Rethinking Language, Mind, and Meaning*, Princeton University Press.